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Another Impoverished Day In Paradise

Homelessness in History

by Lisa Helps

Homelessness and the closing down of public spaces here in this tourist garden city have received a lot of press of late. The last two April issues of Monday Magazine were particularly compelling in this regard and explored the recent phenomenon of the gating of the city and the dire consequences for those who are “locked out.” Monday’s coverage is impressive and compassionate, and Andrew McLeod’s 12-step program for “cities with a problem” offers good practical solutions, both short and long term, to make life easier for those who are homeless, those who want to be housed, those who wish not to live in poverty any longer.

What is missing, I think, from recent writings about homelessness in Victoria, is a sense of history. This is not to say that “the poor have always been with us” and therefore “there’s nothing we can do.” But it is to say that if we take a walk back through the history of this colonial city we will see that, in a sense, the city itself created homelessness and then quickly made bylaws to regulate public spaces and the people in them.

As a result of both the dismantling of the welfare state, and a shift in focus from national economies and the well being of citizens, to global transfers of capital, and the desire of nation states to compete, unimpeded, in an increasingly globalizing market, homelessness and the lack of access to public spaces is clearly a different issue than it was in the late nineteenth century.

Yet attention to the past might help us shape the future.

If we start with the displacement of the Songhees people from the land that is currently the City of Victoria – and this is where we must start - then we see that the city itself is founded on the making homeless of a certain group of people. In 1850, Sir James Douglas “bought” the land where the city now stands. That is, he “purchased” portions of Songhees territory for amounts ranging from £16 for some tracts of land to £100 for others based on 17 shillings per male head of family which was paid in blankets. Some might argue that the Songhees were not actually homeless, afterall they were allocated reserve lands on the periphery of the city. Perhaps we might say they had less home, in that a portion of their traditional territory was usurped to make way for the city.

Once the city was established, City Council quickly set to work in its city building endeavour. Downtown Victoria in the late nineteenth century was certainly a far cry from what it is today. Yet the ability for goods and people to move with ease through the streets of the becoming modern city was as much as concern in the 1870s as it is in 2006, so much so, that in certain instances Council actually ordered the destruction of people’s homes in order to make the streets passable.

At a City Council meeting on February 14, 1877, “Coun. Trounce moved that the City Surveyor be instructed to ascertain and Report for the information of the Council all obstructions on such Streets leading down to the water of the Victoria Harbour.” By the next meeting the surveyor had prepared a report. The report noted first, that on Herald Street between Store Street and the harbour “there are 6 Cottages upon said Street, one being in the centre thereof.” Second, that “on a short unnamed street leading from Store St., to the Water, between Herald and Fisgard One Cottage stands on the Street; and there are at this point fisherman’s cottages built over the water.” Councilor Trounce responded by moving that “the occupiers of all the buildings referred to in the said report ... be notified to cause the said obstruction to be removed within 30 days. And in default of their so doing, then that the City Barrister be instructed to cause the said obstruction to be removed by legal process.” His motion was carried. Members of City Council were not the only ones concerned with building a particular kind of city. In 1890, a newspaper article entitled, “Tear Them Down” declared: “Although some very fine buildings are going up on Johnson Street, there are a number of dens on the lower part which should be pulled down on account of their dilapidated condition. Moreover, they are frequented by

disreputable characters and the practices there resorted to are said to be of the vilest.” One year later the buildings, that is, people’s homes were gone.

Another newspaper report from 1892 describes the confrontation between a First Nations mother and Officer Smith of the Victoria Police Department. Smith went into her home, “an old shack of miscellaneous construction,” and dismantled it. The newspaper report noted: “as Officer Smith was not well up on the Chinook, he simply waves his hands and baton, which indicated a clearance. Mrs. Klootch did not catch on and the officer proceeded to illustrate by removing a couple of pegs. Then she lent an unwilling hand, and ... Officer Smith was able to come back to headquarters and report that all was clear.”

All was clear. This First Nations woman and her children had just been made homeless. The newspaper reporter did not indicate where the evicted woman and her children went. Perhaps onto the street. Perhaps to the periphery of the city to reconstruct their dwelling. Yet perhaps to the writer, living in a becoming modern city in which the very destruction of this woman’s home was a symbol of progress, her future whereabouts and housing conditions were simply beside the point.

At the same time as people were being made homeless by the late nineteenth-century city building enterprise, Council made by-laws that regulated the public spaces of the city. The three most significant by-laws designed to make public spaces passable for some and uninhabitable for others were the Street By-Law, the Public Morals By-Law, and the Parks By-Law.

In 1901, a section entitled “Foot Passengers” was added to the 1873 Street By-Law. This section declared that “no persons shall ... remain on any of the streets or sidewalks in said city, so as to cause any obstruction to the free use of said streets and sidewalks by foot passengers.”

The 1885 “By-Law to Regulate Public Morals” was also amended in 1901. The section pertaining to public city spaces proclaimed: “No person shall be or remain in any street or public place within the city limits who is intoxicated, and no person shall in or upon the street or public places of the city noisily scream, or

con’t on pg. 3



About Street Newz

“Building Bridges
within our Downtown Community”

The Victoria Street Newz mission is to provide a voice, and income opportunities, for economically marginalized and/or socially disadvantaged people, at the same time offering employable skills training, increased self-esteem, confidence, and pride in accomplishments.

Victoria Street Newz is sold by licensed vendors who sign a code of conduct. They buy the newspaper for \$.50 each, and resell them by donation. We like to encourage a sliding-scale economy which offers people a choice.

You can contribute to social change by supporting the Victoria Street Newz coalition and vendors, by reading information that informs you directly about poverty issues, and by taking action for progressive, peaceful, non-violent change.

Victoria Street Newz welcomes written submissions including interviews, event reviews, cartoons, poetry, photographs, or artwork, but we can’t guarantee everything will be published. We reserve the right to edit, and will not print anything libelous, racist, sexist, or homophobic. Letters sent to the editor are assumed to be for publication, must include phone number or email (if possible, for confirmation) and may be edited for length.

Opinions expressed in this newzpaper are not necessarily those of Victoria Street Newz, the editors, advertisers, contributors, readers, or publishers.

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No More Drug War

Submitted by Cyann Ray

Until recently I was somewhat indifferent to the ‘War On Drugs.” The illegality of marijuana has never interfered with me obtaining or consuming this medicinal herb. My only complaint with this war was that cannabis was part of it. Believe me, there is a world of difference between potheads and crackheads. But last month I met a man who broadened my perspective and I wish to share that experience.

San Diegan Norm Stamper became a police officer in 1966 believing it was an honourable profession that carried out the public will. About a year into the job he realized that the American laws dealing with drug usage were abusive, inappropriate and counter-productive. In 1970 President Nixon officially declared the War On Drugs. A slew of prisons were then built which steadily began housing the young, the poor and visable minorities.

The United States contains just 5% of the world’s population yet incarcerates 25% of the world’s prisoners, mostly for non-violent drug offences. During the past 35+ years over a trillion dollars has gone up in smoke trying to enforce the prohibition of drugs.

Did we learn nothing from the ill-effects of alcohol prohibition? Illicit commodities have a high retail price which provides a motive to both expand (increase profit) and protect (often thru violent means). As soon as alcohol was legalized, the criminals lost interest. When was the last time you heard of moonshiners warring over turf or folks going blind from tainted booze? The simple fact is, PROHIBITION DOESN’T WORK. Clearly, people are going to do drugs regardless of the consequences. By keeping drugs illegal, we are allowing criminals to maintain control of production, distribution and, of course, of profits.

The criminal model of drug use has seriously backfired and according to Chief Stamper, is the most flawed public policy since slavery. It’s high time we abandon this approach. Ideally, educating our youth sufficiently would be a great start, though knowledge base does not translate into behaviour. Deeper issues like poverty, boredom and self-esteem must be addressed. But if we fail at keeping kids from trying drugs, we must understand the path of addiction. A medical model would view addicts as ill rather than criminal.

Chief Stamper is now retired after 34 years on the police force and is currently a spokesperson for L.E.A.P. (Law

Enforcement Against Prohibition). He believes that the most economical and ethical position is to legalize all drugs. Victoria Deputy Police Chief Bill Naughton says that very little police time is spent on actual drug enforcement but a huge amount of resources are required to deal with the crime associated with drug use (B.Cleverly, Times Colonist, Ap.13/06). Stamper says that reason, compassion and even-handed administration in a regulated market would not only be cost-effective, but would decrease crime and over-doses thus creating healthier communities.

In Nov./05 the Drug Policy Alliance held its annual conference. Executive Director Ethan Nadelmann opened the event with: Who are we? We are people who love drugs ... who use drugs to relieve pain, to inspire creativity, to motivate, to find god. We are people who hate drugs ... who have lost loved ones thru addiction, over-doses and crime. And we are people who don’t give a damn about drugs but care about civil liberties. We believe in personal freedom because we live in a liberal democracy.

Whether you love drugs, hate drugs or don’t give a damn about drugs, everyone is adversely effected by drug prohibition. Crime and addiction effects all of us and therefore we should care about changing the laws and ending this unwinnable war.

I now see the common denominator between potheads and crackheads: we are both ingesting illicit substances and breaking the law. It doesn’t matter that my drug of choice is a non-addictive natural herb with a well-documented history of therapeutic benefits as opposed to a manufactured chemical cocktail that can quickly turn curious youth into serious addicts who resort to crime to survive. What matters is that policy makers accept the fact that drugs are here to stay and attempting to jail everyone is ridiculous. Drug use (and abuse) is a health issue, not a criminal matter and should be dealt with accordingly.

As a Canadian who has been blaming the States for our Draconian drug laws, I now realize that some Americans are trying diligently to end the war they started and Chief Norm Stamper stands tall among them. Check out his book “Breaking Rank: A top cop’s expose of the dark side of American policing.” Show your support by joining Friends of LEAP at www.leap.ca.

I would like to thank Philippe Lucas and the Vancouver Island Compassion Society, along with S.O.L.I.D (Society of Living Injection Drug users) for inviting Chief Norm Stamper to speak in Victoria.

a few words from janine, street newz coordinator.

5 in the morning, up since three after working until 10. too many hours work, last minute hassles (as usual - remember missing computer, closed office, blown-out power supply box, nasty virus, failed operating system, re-size & re-format all 12 pages - all within days of scheduled print.) invested in new computer to avoid all that. hasn’t changed - still indescribably stressful, maybe the universe suggests it’s time to try something different - documentary films?. can’t remember the last full day off work, probably sometime last summer. not sure it's worth it. many missed meetings, rallies, other fun stuff, too much time staring at computer. lots of great submissions again though, people love street newz, not enough space to print everything - sorry. slightly smaller publication, gone monthly, vendors happy.

new due date for submissions - first friday of the month for the next issue. no promises there'll be one, will try one more time and hope for enjoyment rather than this excruciating stress and pain. will reimburse as best as possible if necessary.

counting my blessings - food in tummy, roof over head, good friends, supportive family. concerns - increased greed, militarization, loss of privacy, brothers and sisters dying for non-renewable resource, careless and unnecessary destruction of beautiful planet, priorities, lack of compassion. continually searching for most effective way to contribute to progressive change, sometimes post thoughts at communitypipe.org/streetnewz.

General Strike dismisses the Captains of Industry

Submitted by George Simich,
theflip.side@hotmail.com

Captain America, Captain Ahab, Captain Bly, Captain Crunch, Captain Fantastic, Captain Janeway, Captain Kangaroo, Captain Kirk. Captain Nemo, Captain Picard, and Captain Queeg occasionally meet on the good ship Bounty with the Captains of Industry in order to assess the world and undermine its future, rewrite its past and distort its present. Thank you. Thank you very much.

Why not? It’s all a fiction anyway. How can it not be a fiction when we are coerced into believing that the possibility of a shortage of gas in the unspecified future has created uncertainty in the marketplace, forcing the price of oil to climb to \$75.00 per barrel? Our Prime Minister informed Canadians that we have to accept these inflated prices at the same time that a retiring American oil executive received a four hundred million dollar platinum parachute, and our oil

companies reported a 60% increase in profits.

Canada possesses the second largest oil reserves in the world, so why does gas cost \$1.10 a litre in Canada, at the same time that it costs \$.04 per litre in Venezuela? Why Mr. Prime Minister? Again, that was a four hundred million dollar retirement package (\$400,000,000.00). That is grotesque — an immeasurable insult to every thinking human being.

When do we start to act in the best interests of this planet, because what is in the best interests of this planet is in our own best interests? When? Currently, the wealthiest 5,000 families in this world are determining how this world should be operated, in whose interest it will be operated, and at whose expense. When will we stand up and simply state that we have had enough: we have had enough of their wars; we have had enough of their pollution; we have had enough of their greed; we have had enough of their arrogance; we have had enough of their contempt.

And as of today, everything changes. And by everything, I mean how we will go about changing this world, including the refusal to use violence against the architects of violence. There are 6.5 billion people who are not wealthy and, maybe, 20,000 people who are; when will we stop these people?

When will we stand up and say that we collectively own the resources of this planet and have the obligation to share them; that we are going to preserve those resources for the generations that will follow; that we will feed the hungry; that we will clothe the needy; that we will house the homeless; that we will give medicine to the people that need it; that we will control our population; that we will educate all children, because this is essential to our future and this planet.

Can you say general strike? General Strike dismisses the Captains of Industry. Can you say international holiday? Stock up; take a week off. Buy nothing. Spend some time with your family. What could they do if everyone everywhere simply took the month off? Take back your world.

Homeless in History - con't fm pg 1

create any offensive noise, or do any act to create or cause a disturbance or to impede or incommode peaceable passengers on such streets or public places, or the inhabitants of the city. And no vagrant or mendicant shall remain in or upon such streets or public places.”

The most explicitly exclusionary was the 1880 Parks By-Law, which made it legal for “any police officer, constable, caretaker or other person duly authorized by the mayor or any alderman of the city, to exclude from the said public squares, parks and grounds all drunken or filthy persons, vagrants and notoriously bad characters and to remove therefrom any person who ... is committing any nuisance or who is guilty of any disorderly conduct therein.”

The language of these bylaws was drawn largely from the 1869 Vagrancy Act, which was incorporated as section of the Criminal Code of Canada in 1892. For all intents and purposes, this section made it a criminal offence to be homeless. In 1972 this section was declared “unconstitutional” and removed from the Criminal Code. It was no longer illegal to be homeless.

Yet where have we come since 1972 in this fine country? This fine

province? This fine west coast city? A preoccupation with competing in an increasingly globalized market, drastic cutbacks to affordable housing, legislation which makes it more difficult for certain people to gain means of subsistence (The “Safe” Streets Act), more concern for tourist dollars than the well being of homeless residents, the gating of the city.

All, it seems, remains clear.

Submitted by Lisa
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Are people in need denied assistance?

In response to a recent study that people in need are being denied and discouraged from getting welfare, Claude Richmond, Minister of Employment and Income Assistance, declared that the B.C. government does not turn away people who need help.

This is not true. There is disturbing evidence that people in genuine need are denied assistance by current B.C. laws, policies, and practices. Consider Martin. Martin had worked as a telemarketer and in the service industry. He became unemployed, lost his place to live, and could no longer stay in an emergency shelter. Martin applied for the \$510 per month welfare allowance for a single employable man because he was in crisis. He was denied. Martin had not passed the two year independence test as required by the new welfare laws passed in 2002: he had accumulated the necessary 840 employment hours, but they were not consecutive hours in the last two years. Homeless and without welfare, Martin is now without the preconditions for finding work. He lives on the street, goes to community centres for food, and spends his time searching for a place to sleep.

Martin is not an exception. In the report Denied Assistance: Closing

the Front Door there is ample evidence that people in need do not get help. This conclusion is based on information collected from the Ministry official service plans, from Ministry statistics-obtained through Freedom of Information requests-and interviews with those denied welfare, community advocates and ministry workers.

Before the new welfare laws, 15% of those who applied were unsuccessful. Now four out of ten persons who are desperate enough to apply for welfare do not get assistance. On average, 2,845 applicants did not get financial help in B.C. each month in 2005.

Few citizens want to apply for welfare. When desperate enough to do so, they need remarkable determination and cleverness to complete the complicated application procedures that rely heavily on electronic services-a particular burden for those without phones, computers, or homes. Many welfare offices have been shut down and applicants must call an 800 information line to apply if they live in Victoria. Applicants must obtain a “pre-application number” and a “confirmation number” after completing an orientation that is only available online. Next there is the three-week search for work. Then comes an

A Challenge to BC’s MLAs



Submitted by
W. Robert Arnold
advocate64@hotmail.com

A few years ago an NDP MLA lived for a month on the money he could receive as a single person from the Ministry of Human Resources of the time. Emery Barnes had been a football player for the B.C. Lions when he was younger and was a tall, friendly man, who I believe cared deeply about people.

The idea of spending a bit of time as a poor person to get a better understanding of what they had to deal with on a day-to-day basis is not new. It has been dealt with in literature a number of times, most famously perhaps in “The Prince and the Pauper”. The Prince and a pauper trade places for a while, which educates the Prince in the realities of his poorest subjects. The implication is that it made him a better King.

This idea has given rise to one of the great philosophies and religious practices ever to happen on earth: Buddhism. Buddha was brought up as an Indian Prince and was very sheltered behind palace walls for the whole of his youth. Then he left the palace to see how the other half lived and was shocked by what he saw. Out of this experience grew his great compassion, which became one of the roots of Buddhism.

It was not until I became poor and had to live on the meagre funds afforded me by the welfare system that I learned what the realities of poverty are. In the middle seventies I took on a mission. It is to eradicate poverty in Canada and eventually in the world. The experience of being poor changed my life in what I consider is a good way.

I believe that if it worked for me and Emery Barnes and the Prince and Buddha, it might also work for the Minister of Employment and Income Assistance, the Minister of Finance and any or all of the rest of the MLAs, who have a say in creating legislation

that affects poor people. I believe that spending a month or two living on what one would get on welfare would make better politicians of them all. It is guaranteed to make them more compassionate toward the poor and homeless people in our society.

It would, in fact, be easier for the MLAs than for people who are really suffering poverty because the MLAs know that their poverty will only last a month or two, whereas poor people can see no end to their situation and struggle to maintain hope that things will get better someday. The MLAs will not have to deal with the kind of depression and hopelessness poor people must cope with every day of their lives.

I challenge Claude Richmond, Carole Taylor, Gordon Campbell, Claire Trevena and Carol James to live on what they would be eligible to receive if they were single persons on welfare for the period of two months. If they really want to see what it is like to live in poverty they could commit their families to sharing their experience by having the family live on what they could get from welfare. Furthermore, I extended this challenge to all of the MLAs on both sides of the house because I suspect they might all benefit from such an experiment.

This experiment would have to run when the Legislature was not sitting because poor people do not get to go and sit in a warm place and have underlings at their beck and call. Poor people do not get to eat subsidized meals at the legislative dining room. Poor people spend much of their time trying to figure out how they’re going to get to the end of the month without going hungry or getting kicked out of their rented room.

I am very interested in how the MLAs, and more specifically the ones I have named, will respond to this challenge. For this reason I am going to include an e-mail address in this article so that the MLA’s can respond to me directly. I am looking forward to writing another article for the Street Newz that deals with those responses next month.

Are people in need denied assistance?

interview in which applicants must prove need by providing copies of many documents-including birth certificate, separation agreement, records of employment, employment insurance application, income tax notices, 60-day bank statements, utility bills, current rent receipt, rental agreement or eviction notice, and more.

Those fortunate to obtain an advocate are more likely to succeed in convincing officials of their need for assistance. Another person interviewed for the Denied Assistance study is Julie. She is 52 years old and has raised five children. She had lived with an abusive partner for 15 years and struggles with depression and the effects of living with Hepatitis C. She applied for welfare three times in the last year, and denied three times, because, like Martin, she could not pass the two-year independence test and prove she had been employed for two consecutive years. Julie slept in a park for months. With the help of an advocate, she finally received welfare.

But there are few advocates for persons seeking welfare. Advocacy services for persons living on low income have been significantly reduced in B.C. after 2002.

Statistics Canada recently announced that in 2004 there are fewer Canadians living on low income compared to previous years; that the unemployment rate is lower; and that after-tax median income for families has increased in 2004. The economy is booming for many in B.C.

But not all jobs pay for the basic costs of living and some people cannot get jobs because they have full-time health, family, and community responsibilities. Others cannot find or keep good jobs, especially the 16% of B.C. citizens over age 25 who do not have a high school diploma.

Some people need welfare. British Columbia has the highest poverty rate in Canada and the most restrictive welfare laws. Closing the front door to welfare and limiting welfare to only two years-unless an exemption can be documented-are not signs of progress, nor indicators of a booming, civilized society.

Submitted by Marge Reitsma-Street - a Professor in Studies in Policy and Practice at the University of Victoria. Mreitsma@uvic.ca Denied Assistance is written by Bruce Wallace, Seth Klein and Marge Reitsma-Street, and available at www.vipirg.ca

Your Thoughts

Budget 2006 - Global Warming

Prime Minister Harper has decided to scrap 5 Billion dollars from the Kyoto commitment. Instead he proposes a “Made in Canada” solution to “Climate Change”. What are the details of his new proposal? Ninety percent of the public is very concerned about the effects of “Climate Change” which has resulted in over 60% increase in extreme weather.

According to the Pembina Institute:

“As a first step, industrialized countries agreed to near-term emission reduction targets under the Kyoto Protocol. In ratifying the protocol, Canada accepted a legal obligation to reduce its GHG emissions to 6% below the 1990 level during 2008-12. Analysis shows that Canada must go on to reduce its emissions to 80% below the 1990 level by 2050 if it is to play a responsible part in the global emission reduction effort.

To meet these targets, Canada’s federal and provincial governments must urgently implement policies and measures capable of significantly reducing GHG emissions below business-as-usual levels.”

According to Tim Flannery, author of the Weather Makers (www.theweathermakers.com), the Kyoto Accord needs to be strengthened 12 times to bring GHG to pre-industrial levels. Harper wants to scrap Kyoto. The Environment Minister opposes GHG controls and should resign. Time has run out. We cannot afford “Oil-Can-Harry” politicians.

Sue Hiscocks & Jim Wight

To The Editor re: Karen Hayes and the story concerning abuse of seniors and tenants in Kiwanis subsidized housing.

Just before deadline Street Newz was alerted that long simmering discontent at Greater Victoria’s Kiwanis’ subsidized housing estates had finally boiled over. The administrator of K West was arrested for criminal harrassment on complaint from an unjustly terminated assistant manager. He in turn filed a criminal harrassment complaint against her, and she was arrested and charged. Complaints of assaults on tenants, intimidation of tenants, illegal administrative procedures, and improper use of the threat of eviction cued the Women Helping Women Coalition to investigate and then hold a demonstration at Kiwanis’ Village at which a letter was delivered by hand, by disaffected tenants, who had to brave a line of rentacops to do so. The Victoria Police have appointed a senior officer as special investigator into the situation. The administrator will probably also be sued for wrongful dismissal and civil rights violations.

Be alert for more on this story in the mainstream media, and in the meantime read *One Bad Apple* by Charmaine Spencer which demonstrates that there is “something rotten” in the state of Canada’s subsidized housing. Il intent to write more about this issue for forthcoming Street Newz editions.

Don Startin

To contact Women Helping Women: 727-7625 or whelpingw@telus.net

To the Editor of Black Press Newspapers, in response to Tom Fletcher’s Column - “Workfare not a dirty word.

So the ever-increasing numbers of people who are sleeping in shelters and on our streets, standing in line at food banks and soup kitchens, and walking around our communities suffering from a variety of addiction and mental health issues, are living like this by choice? Is this what Minister Richmond would have us believe? It’s happening all over North America, so we shouldn’t point fingers at the provincial government’s “no-nonsense” approach to welfare.

I find the heartlessness of the current government’s approach to people who have major barriers to employment, as well as their response to poverty in general, shocking. The poor are sleeping in shelters and on the streets because there is a lack of affordable housing. They are eating in soup kitchens and relying on food banks because income assistance and minimum wage part-time jobs do not enable them to buy sufficient groceries. And finally, a shelter or a park bench is not a home which is why these sick and broken people are walking around like strangers in a strange land, with all their worldly goods piled into shopping carts.

Some of the assumptions the government seems to be operating under are:

1. If we give the poor too much help, they will become dependent on us.
2. If we raise the rates, every lazy “bum” across Canada will move to BC.
3. If we make it difficult for “them” to get on the dole in the first place, maybe they’ll go away and our numbers will drop.

Well, the numbers on assistance may have dropped and certainly some of them have found employment, but far too many of the poor are living rough in parks and back alleys, where they must resort to charity and/or theft in order to survive. I can hear Minister Richmond now: “Are there no work houses?”

We are not all created equal, Sir: some of us need more help than others and will need that help until we die. And the most appropriate kind of help may not necessarily be a job. Tom Fletcher’s column clearly indicates many British Columbians are suffering from two kinds of poverty: a poverty of income and a poverty of compassion. I don’t really know which is worse.

Yours truly,
Susan Draper

To Mayor Alan Lowe

Having spent the winter on the streets of Victoria, I must comment on the way that some members of your police force treat the poor and the homeless in this city. I can sum it in one word, Terrible! I have had a number of encounters with your force and each time I have been treated like a criminal even before they have checked my identification to discover that I have no record. Others on the street can concur on the confrontational attitude displayed towards them.

I have held my tongue and put up with their attepts to incite my anger in most instances, however an incident occurred recently that I can not let slide. My son and I were standing on the sidewalk downtown looking at some compact discs that I had found. The police approached us and the final result was a search of my personal belongings, using a probable cause that we would be laughed out of any court room. I have made a complaint against the officers which is being processed.

I am writing to find out what you are thinking when you put policies in place that make life more miserable for those whose life is already pretty bleak. I refer to your policies of clear cutting any bush or shrub that any person might sleep behind or in making it nearly impossible to find a bathroom or payphone at night.

I’m pretty sure that you have not spent time living on the street, so you might not have an awareness of a homeless person’s plight. I can tell you that it is not an easy one. Then, to have a city government that goes out of its way to add to their burdens, well that’s just plainly mean spirited. I am asking that you think of what it must be like to be homeless due to circumstances beyond your control. Put yourself in the shoes of people that society has seemingly deemed disposable. I ask you to pray for those working poor who are one paycheque away from the street. I ask you to extend a hand up to these peoples, instead of using the jackboot of authority to keep them down.

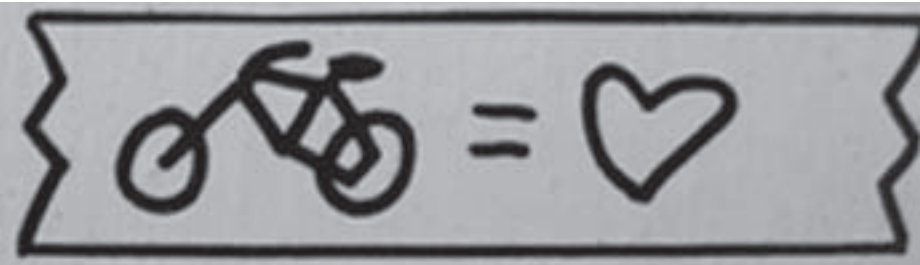
Terry Cound

Those who forget their history are doomed to repeat it.

The Nazi Holocaust has special meaning for me since my grandmother, three uncles, 10 or more cousins (we were totally cut off for four years) along with a large, extended family were among the six million victims. Not one of my relatives who came under Nazi domination survived. This is why I am so concerned with the rising tide of antisemitism in Europe where “Kill the Jews” is chanted in many demonstrations.

Think of the cartoon riots in Europe and Muslim countries, yet antisemitic cartoons are still published in our media. Especially important is to do everything possible to end ongoing genocides, and fight racism in any shape or form.

Nameste, Max - maxyas@victoria.tc.ca



TRE’S OFFICIAL RESPONSE TO THE MINISTER’S DECISION

Hello to everyone, it's Tre here. The Minister of Justice Vic Toews has announced his decision regarding my extradition to the U.S. He has issued an unconditional surrender order for me to face the arson charges in the state of Oregon. “Unconditionally” means he is not granting our request to get assurances from the U.S. government that I will be treated fairly or that my raw, vegan diet will be honoured while incarcerated in the U.S. Soon I will post all the details regarding our submissions and the Minister’s response so everyone may have a clear idea of what is going on. Even though this decision is disappointing to me, I’m not surprised. My lawyer, Tim and I will be immediately filing the necessary paperwork letting the Canadian government know our intention to appeal his decision. I find it quite unfortunate that the powers that be within the Canadian government seem to be unable or unwilling to exercise their own conscience and sever themselves from the political pressure and intimidation from the powers that be to the south. This is true not only for my case, but in the matters pertaining to John Graham, Mark Emery and Al Ruemeyer. This calls to mind Meher Arar and others who have been unlawfully detained in Canada, turned over to the U.S., shipped to other countries and endured intense suffering and torture only later to be found innocent of any wrongdoing.

This is not a sad day. This is actually a joyous day because it is a gorgeous spring day. Birds and other animals are alive and active. I can hear them through the open window of the cell I occupy. Grandfather Sun is beaming down on us through a brilliantly clear blue sky. I am alive, healthy and well. It’s a joyous day because I’m not going anywhere! I’m staying in Canada while we appeal the Minister’s decision. I’m staying here at Wilkie where my diet is being honoured so I can continue to nourish my body and strengthen my spirit for what lies ahead. I will continue to take whatever action possible to help the truth prevail and ultimately see me free from these walls. It’s a joyous day because I am announcing a full-fledged worldwide campaign to achieve vindication for myself. Support for me and my case in Canada and the U.S., as well as throughout the world, continues to grow. This support is not going away, it is only increasing. I am extremely grateful for the family I have around me, including a dedicated and committed defense committee helping me achieve what I need for as long as I need it.

For more info please visit www.trearrow.org Tre is open to doing interviews with anyone at anytime in the U.S., Canada, and beyond. To schedule an interview please send an email to conor@riseup.net

Some One Please,
Think of the Children!



submitted by Comrade Fletcher
prideandunity@hotmail.com

Every day hundreds of people enter and leave drop in centers around the city of Victoria. These centers are used by many different people of many different backgrounds for many different reasons. Some come to these places for help with drug addictions, to see a doctor, apply for welfare, pick up their social assistance checks, eat, sleep, visit, get clothing, or just get out of the cold for a while. If it wasn't for these places of refuge many would find themselves out on the streets. For all the complaints we here about drop ins, we have to realize what our city would look like without them, where would all those people go? I am sure the mall and library would be even more filled with the homeless and poor as would our parks and sidewalks. I am also sure the business community would be complaining even more if this were the case. If nothing else our society would look and act a lot differently.

Recently the Out Of the Rain youth emergency shelter closed for the season. Up to 30 youth a night had been staying there on mats on the floor of a gymnasium or church hall in a varying location every night through most of the winter. At night they received a meal before bed and one in the morning along with visits from the street nurse and access to clean socks and toothbrushes, and other sanitary items. For many this was the only refuge, as it was the only place that allowed people to bring pets and did not turn people away because they were drunk or on drugs. The out of the rain was a place of aid and hope.

Also at this time the Over Capacity shelter stopped opening the doors. This was a similar program for non youth often held at the Mustard Seed or the Open Door to create more room for people that could not get into the overfilled shelters.

It was not that long ago that we saw the most recent manifestation of the Tent City fighting for the overturning of the city bylaws making it illegal to occupy any piece of land within the city after 11pm. To make that more clear, there is no actual law stating you can not sleep outside here, just a series of laws that make every single place illegal to sleep. David Johnston continues to be thrown in jail for disobeying these laws.

When you walk into the Open Door drop in you will often find many people sleeping on the table tops, passed out in their chairs, especially after a rainy night. You will also find many people playing music, eating, and socializing or often waiting to see a staff member in front of the door. But one thing you will not see is youth. It seems that the open door has a policy stating they are not allowed to have any one under the age of 18 in the center. I was recently told by a staff member that this was being enforced because the police have been telling them they have to keep the youth out.

The idea behind segregating the youth is to slow the spread of use of crystal meth by keeping the know users quarantined away from the youth. Theoretically they claim that if we don't allow the youth around the addicts, then they will be less likely to become users them selves. Although some may argue that seeing people flailing and freaking out on meth highs may have the opposite effect, and that maybe we should allow or even encourage them to see the users and addicts.

The real concern comes in though because the Open Door drop in opens at 7am, and very little else is open at all through out the day that allows youth. The Cool-Aid Society opens its doors at 9am, but it does not have nearly the facilities of the open door, nor the budget. They can not offer many of the services of the open door, often having less food, no clothing donations and far less room. The open door plays movies and has pool tables and a piano, a shower, as well as offering free meal tickets for the upper room soup kitchen. But even if the Cool-Aid society could afford the space and budget for their drop in to offer all these things, they still are not open until 2 hours later, and are closed for lunch. So where are these kids suppose to go?

It is illegal to sleep outside, yet there is no shelter for much of the year for many people and the shelters that are open are not available to any one with a dog or that is drunk or using, even though these addictions do not go away at night. These shelters also harbour complaints of violence, unclean living conditions and prison style rules. As well during the day there is often no place to go but the street, and it seems the Victoria City Police are enforcing that. Are the kids on the streets in more risk in a warm drop in center with pool tables, and music and computer use, or on a cold street corner where most of the drug dealers hang out? With no where to go that is safe, how can we expect them to make the right decisions?

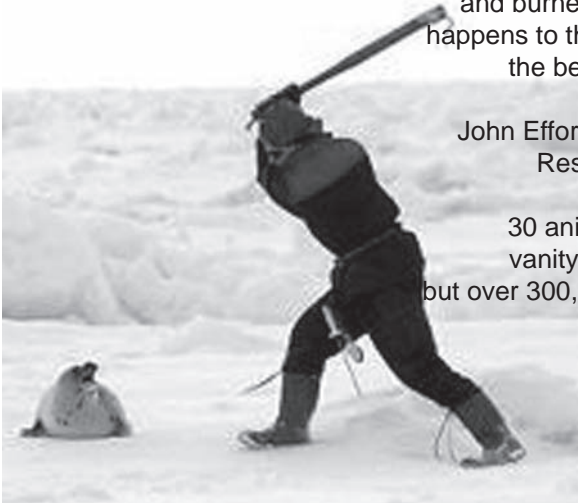


from: hope-care.org

"Mr. Speaker, I would like to see the 6 million seals, or whatever number is out there, killed and sold, or destroyed and burned. I do not care what happens to them... the more they kill the better I will love it."

John Efford, Minister of Natural Resources, 2003.

30 animals died for his vanity in this one coat, but over 300,000 die for this evil year after year.

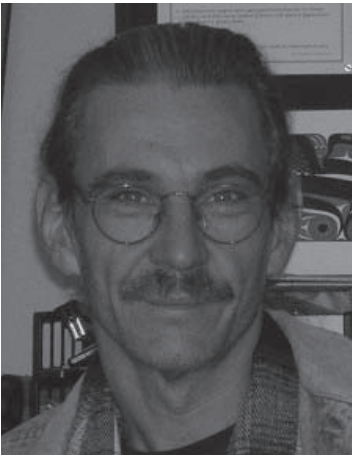


A Day Without Immigrants - May 1st, 2006, NYC

photo by Uncle Murph
<http://nyc.indymedia.org/en/2006/05/69147.html>



This spring saw the largest wave of civil unrest in American history as millions took to the streets to protest bill HR4437, which would define 12 million undocumented people, and anyone who helps them, as felons. According to DemocracyNow.org, the Corrections Corporation of America is the largest private prison corporation in the US, with 60,000 beds - the first was constructed in Texas. some people have been arrested, jailed, and/or deported when they apply for their legal documents.



One Less Musician

My name is Glenn. Many know me as at least till now, as a regular busker here in Vic for the last six years, making a small income which I barely survived on, with no other source of income at all.

Two years ago I exposed that City Hall was not giving proper licensing with the small tags given, buskers were told their receipt was their license, a lie with intent! I was given a ticket for no license that was never issued, and I was assaulted by a bylaw officer at that time. I went on Speakers Corner about this, and a few days later was given a new badge and a proper business license, I showed it to the other buskers at the time and told them they were lied to by City hall. City hall is still telling people

the same thing even now, over two years later! Seems they will take your money, say you're now legally licenced, but give you no license, so they can entrap you, if they wish. And I bet you thought City Hall was fair!

Now it seems the bylaw office and one person who works on Government St. are clearly out to get me, with police they have unlawfully seized 3 of my guitars and have caused considerable grief and hardship for myself. In December my favourite guitar was seized, I sent an email to a City Council member at that time about my seized guitar, and on-going torment from the now biased bylaw enforcement office, she did nothing at all!

After my second guitar was seized, I wrote and appeared in front of the City Council on the 13th of April about the unjust actions of city officers, my seized buitars, and their disregard for my rights as a Canadian. It would seem the whole council cares little, and thinks it's a joke!

On Friday night (the 21st of April), while playing with another musician on Government St., a third guitar was seized and my best expensive case. Seemed like one more false complete from the person who works on Government St., close to Murchie's. Wonder why I was not out there at Christmas time singing Christmas songs on Douglas St., as I have been every Christmas for the past five years? Now you know the truth, how a hard working guy who plays a guitar, and survives from what he makes, is treated by the bylaw enforcement, city hall, the city council, and the police! One less musician, one more space down on Government Street for a panhandler! But that's OK, or is it?

Harper should ban nuclear ship visits to Victoria

The deteriorating situation between our southern neighbours and Iran is truly nightmarish. Both countries are led by macho madmen. Both have credibility deficits (Bush with fictitious Iraq 'weapons of mass destruction,' Ahmadinejad withhissupposedlypeaceful nuclear programme). Both pervert religion to further their hegemonic designs.

Both Peter Goodspeed in a front cover story in the National Post on April 19 and Seymour Hersh in the April 17 number of the New Yorker report that the Americans have been conducting simulated nuclear weapons bombing missions against Iran.

Mr. Hersh reports that 'American Naval tactical aircraft, operating from carriers in the Arabian Sea, have been flying simulated nuclear-weapons delivery missions - rapid ascending maneuvers known as "over the shoulder" bombing - since last summer, the former official said, within

range of Iranian coastal radars.'

Similarly, Mr. Goodspeed reports that 'other reports suggested the U.S. Navy has conducted simulated nuclear weapons bombing missions from aircraft carriers in the Arabian Sea. Two years ago, British and U. S. military officers held a joint war game, codenamed Hotspur 2004, in which a joint task force launched an invasion of the fictitious Middle Eastern country of Korona, whose borders and characteristics coincided exactly with Iran.'

Canadians should realize that we are already complicit in the dangerous war-planning operations of this reckless Republican liar. Huge nuclear-powered and nuclear-armed U. S. Navy aircraft carriers and submarines visit Victoria regularly. These 'rest and recreation' stopovers are not worth the trouble. Rowdy American sailors buy local prostitutes, alcohol, cocaine and heroin,

causing so much trouble the local police cannot control them. American military police supplement the Victoria Police, patrolling our downtown streets in a vain attempt to mitigate the nocturnal mayhem.

If Prime Minister Harper is truly concerned about maintaining Canadian sovereignty in our coastal waters, and protecting Canadians from terrorism, he could start by banning these dangerous and provocative American nuclear ship visits. Instead of blindly supporting Bush's belligerence, he should encourage his American counterpart to engage in sincere good-faith diplomatic negotiations with the Iranians.

Submitted by Gregory Hartnell, President
Concerned Citizens' Coalition
gregory_hartnell@yahoo.com



Left Coast Happenings

Street Newz offers no guarantee that this info is accurate, or that the events will actually occur. For a free weekly list, email events@pej.ca.

Mondays	Movie Monday - 6:30 pm, Eric Martin Pavilion (1900 block Fort St.) by donation 595-FLIC or www.islandnet.com/mm	
Alt Mondays	Victoria Peace Coalition - 7:30 pm, 2994 Douglas St. dolcla@islandnet.com	
Alt. Mondays	Communities Solidarity Coalition - www.communities-solidarity.org, info@communities-solidarity.org	
Tuesdays	Voice of Palestine - 8:00-9:00pm (PST) on 102.7FM. Listen live at http://www.coopradio.org/listen/ or to archives in Audio Clips.	
First Tuesdays	Documentary, Debate, Democracy! Open Cinema 7pm, Hermann's (753 View Street) Info: www.opencinema.ca, opencinema@shaw.ca	
Third Tuesdays	Tell 'n Show 1415 Broad St. Info: www.tellnshow.ca or thetellnshow@gmail.com	
Tuesdays	Victoria Bluegrass Association Jams 1620 Fernwood, Orange Hall, 7:30 pm 472-6483 free for listeners, \$2 for players - all levels	
Tuesdays	Hand Drumming Drop-in, \$10, James Bay New Horizons Centre, 234 Menzies. Beg: 7-8 pm, Adv: 8:15-9:15 pm Info 386-1054 Drums provided.	
Wednesdays	Falun Gong faluninfo.net. Fernwood Community Centre, 1240 Gladstone Fernwood. Victoria. 5-7 p.m. Info: (250)386-8805 free	
Wednesdays	Peace Vigils at the Legislature - 7:00 - 8:00 pm - Peace Ambassadors needed to greet international visitors! Imagine: War Never Again	
Wednesdays	SOLID (Society of Living Intravenous Drugusers) except welfare day, 7:00-9:00 pm, 1947 Cook St. \$3 bus fare reimbursed	
Wednesdays	Playback Theater: The Arts of Empathy & Culture-Jamming 6-9 pm Info: esther@muirhead.ca, www.playbacknet.org/interplay/journal, 380-0036	
Second Thursdays	Council of Canadians Coffee Nights at the Solstice Café , 529 Pandora, 7-9 pm	
Fridays	Coffeehouse discussion group 7:30 pm JJ's coffeehouse in Brentwood Bay 7:30 pm Info: sue_stroud@hotmail.com	
Fourth Fridays	Café Simpatico, Activist coffeehouse ,1923 Fernwood. Doors at 7 pm. casc@telus.net , 598-7690, communitypipe.org	
Last Fridays	Propel Yourself! Victoria Critical Mass Bike Rides - Centennial Square, 5 pm. bring bike, board, helmet, lights, bliss.	
Sat Mornings	Sikh meditation -all welcome 6-7 am at Gurdwara Singh Sabha Society of Victoria (470 Cecelia Rd, Victoria, BC) Info: jindi@hotmail.com	
Saturdays	Plastic Recycling - soft & hard plastics: styrofoam blocks & chips, plastic bags, and rigid plastics. Info: 382-4604. www.pacificmobiledepots.com	
Saturdays	Tour of Merve Wilkinson's Wildwood Forest , Ladysmith. Info: Jay, 250-245-5540 Directions: www.ecoforestry.ca/WildwoodMap.htm	
Sat & Sun	Falun Gong faluninfo.net 10-noon, Beacon Hill Pk, across from petting zoo, all winter. 386-8805 free	
Alt. Sundays	Sierra Club Nature Outings - Call Nikko for more details at 386-5255 x241, www.sierraclub.ca/bc	
Sundays	Victoria Folk Music Society 7:30pm, Norway House, 1110 Hillside www.pacificcoast.net/~vfms or 413-3213, 24 hrs.	
Sundays	Immigrant/Refugee Youth Group & Buddy Volunteers ICA-930 Balmoral, 1-3 pm Info: Suki-885-1310 or youth@icavictoria.org	
Monthly	Faith in Action -a multi-faith coalition working to put more heart into BC's income assistance. www.bcfaithinaction.ca	
Monthly	Vancouver Island Vegetarian Associaton (VIVA) Potlucks www.islandveg.com	
All month	CRD Parks outings and explorations for all ages. 478-3344 www.crd.bc.ca/parks/brochure2.htm	
Ongoing	Auditions for Spilt Milk Improv Comedy Troupe Info: (250) 479-3374, spiltmilk@centralmail.com, www.spiltmilkcomedy.com	
Tues, May 23rd	Reel Youth Claymation Workshop 4:30-7:00pm, FCA, Fernwood, 1921 Fernwood Rd. Info: www.reelyouth.ca, www.reelyouth.ca/trailer.html, erica@reelyouth.ca	
Tues, May 23rd	Grasslands/Desert South Okanagan National Park Presentation - 7:00-8:30 pm, Emily Carr Library Meeting Room, (3500 Blanshard St), Info: 250-388-9292	
May 24-27th	4th Annual Institute in Response-Based Practice -Re-Shaping Responses to Victims of Violent Crimes, Duncan Info: 250-701-0713 or awade@cityu.edu	
Thurs, May 25th	Reel Youth Film Festival - The Vic Theatre (808 Douglas Street), 7pm, Info: www.reelyouth.ca, erica@reelyouth.ca	
Fri, May 26th	How to save the world—God? Drugs? Revolution? McPherson Theatre Info: 604-251-1781 or alanclements1@compuserve.com or www.WorldDharma.com	
Sat, May 27th	Bike Skills course 550 Yates St www.biketoworkvictoria or 920-5775	
Sat, May 27	Listening to Trees, Sharing the Dream, Changing the Story so that All may Live - workshop Info: 382-3582 or www.islandnet.com/~msw or msw@islandnet.com	
Sat, May 27th 8632.	Historic Event on the Saanich Peninsula: Tseycum Ancestral Remains Repatriation Mary Winspear Center, 2223 Beacon Ave. Sidney Info: htuffs@shaw.ca or 652	
Sun, May 28th	MONEY! MONEY! MONEY! 1.30 to 5.00 pm, 7.30 for the movie “Money as Debt” Orchid Room, Sandman Hotel, 2852 Douglas St.	
May 28-31st	A Journey of the Past, Present and Future - Healing Our Spirit-10th Annual Aboriginal HIV/AIDS conf. Info: 1-866-745-8884 or www.healingourspirit.org	
Tues, May 30th 416-603-3559	Healthy Mind, Body, Planet-A Multi-Media Tour - 7 pm, Dreamspace, 751 Discovery St. Free, donations Info: Angela Bischoff—www.Greenspiration.org, 416-538-7413 or	
May 30-Jun 5th	Bike to Work Week! Info: www.biketoworkvictoria.ca, (250) 920-5775	
May 31-Jun 2nd	Resist the Hemispheria 2006 Summit -Winnipeg Summit planned by North America's SuperCorridor Coalition (NASCO-www.nascocorridor.com)	
Weds, May 31st	Planners For Tomorrow Youth submissions due date - http://www.plannersfortomorrow.ca	
June 2-4th	Labor Struggles on the Edge: Ports, Borders and Workers in the Pacific Northwest - 38th Annual Conference, Evergreen State College Olympia, WA www.pnlha.org.	
June 3-9th	Cob Workshop – Construct a 230sqft cob workshop, with a building permit and an engineer. Info: www.eco-sense.ca, 250-478-2680	
Tues, June 6th www.cnpm.ca	Developing a High Performance Board of Directors – workshop, Dunsmuir Lodge Info: www.gemssecure.com/events/npws/2006/e/ or www.coastcapitalsavings.com or	
Weds, June 7th dispute.resolution.uvic.ca/	Landscapes of the heart: How the places we call home affect our conflicts -12:30-2:30 pm, UVic-Harry Hickman Bldg, Rm 105 Info: dispute@uvic.ca, 721-8199,	
Weds, June 7th	Financial Fitness Workshop - presented by the Centre for Sustainability and Vancity Info: www.centreforsustainability.ca, (604) 331-0366	
June 8 & 9th	Saving Small Towns Conference – Cumberland Info: 250-890-0519 or cvinsights@telus.net	
June 8-10th	BALLE 2006 Conference – Burlington VT – creating local living economies. Info: www.livingeconomies.org/events/conference06.	
June 9-11th	Living Simply For The Earth - Centre for Earth and Spirit, 6040 East Sooke Rd. Info: (250) 642-3546, gces@telus.net, www.centreforearthandspirit.org	
Sat, June 10th	Bike Skills course 550 Yates St www.biketoworkvictoria or 920-5775	
July 12-17th	2006 International Youth Summit on Sustainable Urban Transportation Info: www.youthsummit.ca.	
June 15-17th	Conference: Gaining Ground Leadership Summit on Sustainable Urban Development - Laurel Pt Inn Info: www.gaininggroundsummit.com	
Fri, June 16th	Retreat at the Glenairley - Centre For Earth and Spirit (East Sooke.) Info: www.centreforearthandspirit.org	
June 16-18th	World Youth Forum - Vancouver Info: http://www.eya.ca/wuf/wuf_registration.html	
June 19-23rd	World Urban Forum III Our Future: Sustainable Cities-Turning Ideas into Action Vancouver www.unhabitat.org/wuf/2006/default.asp	
June 19–23rd	Victoria Days of Peace Info: www.victoriadaysofpeace.ca/	
June 22–24th	Gather the Women - Weaving a World that Works – UVic, \$125-\$150 Cdn or U.S. funds (sliding scale) Info & Reg: www.gatherthewomencanada.org	
June 23-28th	World Peace Forum Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada Info: Web: www.worldpeaceforum.ca, admin@worldpeaceforum.ca, 604 687 3223	
Sat, June 24th Sunset Beach on English Bay	Walk for Peace, Justice and Sustainability , Noon-Seaforth Peace Flame Park (south end Burrard Bridge), or Waterfront Skytrain Station (Canada Place) Rally-2p.m. at (at Bute and Beach Ave) Featuring Cindy Sheehan, speakers from around the world, and a variety of musical acts. Info: “Stop War” <stopwar_van@yahoo.ca>	
June 25-27th	Int’l Peace Education Conference - BCTF Vancouver Info: www.worldpeaceforum.ca or 604-871-1865	
Mon, June 26th	Anne Feeney at the Railway Club (679 Dunsmuir, Van.), with Joey Only, Dave Lippmann and an unannounced surprise guest. www.annefeeney.com	
June 29-July 1st	Peacebuilding workshop - Info: http://dispute.resolution.uvic.ca/, 721-8777, dispute@uvic.ca	
July 8 & 9th	2nd Annual Organic Islands Festival - 505 Quayle Road (Horticulture Centre of the Pacific) Info: 250 656-8130 www.organicislands.ca	
July to December	Animal Rights Activist Tour - 31 states and 6 provinces Info: www.hope-care.org	
Aug 4-7th	Filberg Festival, Comox – celebrating excellence in art, craft and music Info: www.filbergfestival.com, 250 334-9242, info@filbergfestival.com	
August 21-24th	Accessibility Conference Info: momsonthemove@telus.net	
September	University 101 – free liberal arts, dinner included. Applications available in July from 910 Gov't St. or www.uvic.ca/uni101	
Oct 20-22nd	Family Focus 2006 - Richmond. Info: www.familyfocusconference.com, info@familyfocusconference.com, 604-279-7057	

“Hope is the thing with
feathers that perches
on our soul.”

Emily Dickinson

“War loves to prey
upon the young.”

Sophocles,
495 BCE - 406 BCE

Food Resources

9-10 CLUB (ST. ANDREW’S SOUP KITCHEN)
740 View St. Victoria, B.C. V8W 1J8 ph: 388-5571 8 - 10am seven days a week. Church-run club providing daily meals on a drop-in basis.

ANAWIM COMPANION SOCIETY
973 Caledonia Street Victoria B.C. V8T 1E7 phone: 382-0283
Mon, Tues, Thurs 10am - 5 pm, Weds, Fri 10am8pm, Sat 10am 4pm
Laundry, showers, meals, clothing, limited housing spaces.

COMMUNITY FOOD BANK
4-697 Goldstream Avenue, Victoria, B.C., V9B 2X2 phone: 474-4443
Tues, Weds: 10am 3pm, Closed last week of month

FOOD NOT BOMBS - a collectively run food kitchen. Ph: 383-5144, ext 1940
Free vegetarian serving Sundays, 3 pm - Harris Green (Pandora & Vancouver)
Bring plastic containers for bowls, bags 4 produce. http://resist.ca/~fnb-victoria

FRUIT AND VEGGIE BOX
C/o Blanshard Community Centre phone: 388-7696
James Bay Community Project phone: 388-7844
WorkLink Employment Society phone: 478-9525
Victoria Native Friendship Centre phone: 384-3211
Wholesale prices, various size boxes. Pay first, pick up following wk.

JAMES BAY COMMUNITY SCHOOL
140 Oswego Street, Victoria, B.C. V8V 2B1 phone: 389-1470
-Seniors Dinners on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5 PM - \$5.75
-Community Dinners Weds, approx. every other mth, usually \$4 & \$2 -12 & under. Tickets must be purchased at the centre in advance-Community school cafe open Mon - Fri 11:45 am -12:30 pm. \$3.25 & child 2.75.

MEALS ON WHEELS
9751-3rd st. Sidney, B.C., V8L 3A5 phone: 655-9222
For residents of Greater Victoria who, because of age, disability or illness, are unable to prepare an adequate meal for themselves, have inadequate cooking facilities, have no one to prepare meals, or have health and social needs. Referrals from doctors, health & Social Services agencies, concerned friends, family, or personal requests. Current cost of meals- \$6.00. In addition to nutritional benefits, some social interaction.

MUSTARD SEED STREET CHURCH www.mustardseed.ca
625 Queens Avenue, Victoria, B.C., V8T 1L9 phone: 953-1575
Outreach: Mon-Fri 8am-4pm, Food bank: M,T, W, Th 9-11:45am, 12:30-2:00 pm M, W, F - Family Hampers, Th - Singles & Couples w/out children. Food bank is closed the week following welfare cheque day. Drop in for food, friendship, counseling, and crisis intervention. Food hampers available. One visit/mth.

OUR PLACE (formerly the Open Door)
713 Johnson St., Victoria, BC V8W 1M8 phone: 385-2454
7am - 3 pm Monday to Friday, closed weekends
Victoria's ‘Living Room’ - a drop in centre with free sandwiches, doughnuts, coffee, tea, bread, sometimes produce, clothing room, counseling & referrals.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY
828 View Street, Victoria B.C. V8W 1K2 phone: 382-0712
9 am-12:30 pm, 1:30 pm-4:30 pm Mon-Friday, Tues aft for Women
Must be 19 yrs, unless referred by parents, ASK, or Soc Services. Food, clothing, household items. Home visits, food vouchers for parents w/children.

SAINT SAVIOUR’S KITCHEN
310 Henry Street, Church Hall (VicWest) phone: 384-8773
Rainbow Kitchen for women and children, Weds and Fris, 12 noon 1:30 pm

SALVATION ARMY, Family Services and Counselling (singles, too)
2695 Quadra, at Hillside ph: 386-8521 Monday Friday, 9 am 3:30 pm
Emergency food hampers, clothing & small housewares vouchers.

SIKH TEMPLE
Blackwood at Topaz (towards summit park), enter right side door
Every Sunday at noon - Free food serving, lentil dahl and chapatis, etc.

STREETLINK EMERGENCY SHELTER
1634 Store St., Victoria, B.C. V8W 1S2 ph: 384-3634, office 383-1951
Free dinner 7 days a week, 3 pm for meal ticket, serving at 3:30

ST. JOHN THE DIVINE
1611 Quadra St., Victoria, B.C., V8W 2L5 phone: 383 7169
Food bank open Tues & Fridays, 10 am-noon, in church basement. (Closed Fri and Tuesday after Welfare Wednesday, and Tuesdays after Monday stat.)

UPPER ROOM SOCIETY
919 Pandora Avenue, Victoria, B.C., V8V 3P4 phone: 388-7112
Office Hrs: Mon-Fri 9am-4pm Meals: Mon-Sat 12-1pm, 45:30 pm
Meal pass costs \$26 a month, or \$1 at the door.

Good Food Box Program - Duncan area - where healthy eating is an act of community. 250-746-4204, www.providence.bc.ca, mlthomson@uniserve.com

Breakfast Club

- First Saturday:** Christ Church Cathedral, 912 Vancouver St., 7:45-9:30 am
coffee, tea, orange juice, eggs & hash browns, also ham
- Second Saturday:** St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Hall, 680 Courtney St, 8-10 am
coffee, tea, pancakes and ham, no eggs
- Third Saturday:** Glad Tidings Pentecostal Church Hall, 1800 Quadra St. 8-10
coffee, tea, pancakes, eggs, ham
- Fourth Saturday:** Central Baptist Church, 833 Pandora, 8-10 am; 385-7786
coffee, tea, pancakes, eggs, sausage
- Fifth Saturday:** BC Ferry Workers’ Union at St. Andrew’s Hall, 8-10 am
coffee, tea, pancakes and ham, no eggs

Housing Resources

No Cost for Service, Time Limited Stay

Salvation Army (Emerg men only) 525 Johnson Street, 384-3396
Streetlink 1634 Store Street, 383-1951
Sandy Merriman House (for women) 809 Burdett Avenue, 480-1408
Sobering & Assessment Ctr (24 hr) 1125 Pembroke (@ Cook) 213-4444
Out of the Rain (Youth 15-25) 812-0490 winter only, various locations
Kiwanis Youth Shelter (13-18) 2117 Vancouver St., 386-8282
Hill House - Women with children 479-3963
Sooke Transition House 642-2591 Women with or without children
Vic. Women’s Transition House 385-6611 Women with or w/out kids
Cridge Centre for the Family 1190 Kings Rd 386-7291 Women & kids
Kiwanis House for single women 16-29 w/ one child 382-1004
Margaret Laurence House 995-0058 Women & kids escaping abuse

Low Cost Monthly Rentals

YWCA Women’s Residence - 880 Courtney Street, 386-7511
Ritz Hotel - 710 Fort Street, 381-1868
Fairfield Hotel - 710 Cormorant St., 386-1621
York Hotel - 711 Johnson Street, 385-2544
Douglas Hotel - 1450 Douglas Street, 383-4157
Ocean Island Backpackers - 791 Pandora Avenue 385-1788
Turtle Refuge Backpackers - 1608 Quadra Street 386-4471
Vic. Human Exchange Soc. 361- 2762, 1-800-691-9366, www.humanx.org.

Subsidized and/or Supported Housing Services

BC Housing (subsidized - low income families, 55+, or w/disabilities)
301- 3440 Douglas Street, 475-7550 www.bchousing.org
Burnside Gorge Community Assoc. 388-5251 members.shaw.ca/bgca
Capital. Region Housing (subsidized, low income families, 55+, disabilities)
623 Fisgard, 388-6422 www.crd.bc.ca/housing
Coordinated Housing Registry (subsidized & supported housing) www.coolaid.org 826 Cormorant St. 356-2548
M’Akola Housing Society 384-1423
Pacifica Housing Advisory Assoc. (families) 827 Fisgard 385-2131
Pacifica Housing Serv/Downtown Outreach Serv (connects low-income folk w/ housing in private sector) 826 Cormorant 356-2555
Pandora Youth Apts 753 Pandora, For 15-19 yrs, Andrea - 380-2663
St. Vincent de Paul Soc. 382-2767 www.svdpvictoria.com/services/
Victoria Senior Citizen Housing Society #501-620 View, 384-3434

Housing Searches on the Internet

BC Housing Subsidized Housing List www.bchousing.org/Housing
Brown Bros. Property Management www.brownbros.com
BC Co-Operative Housing www.chf.bc.ca/
Camosun Off Campus Housing List www.ccss.camosun.bc.ca
David Burr Property Management www.davidburr.com/
UVic Off Campus Housing www.housing.uvic.ca/offcampus/search.htm

Helpful Housing Hints

1. Add your name to the BC Housing list.
2. Add your name to the Coordinated Housing Registry.
3. Get the addresses & phone numbers of subsidized or supported housing units from the Cool Aid Society, the BGCA, M’Akola, etc. If you find one you like, make friends, impress them, ask them to pull your name off the list. They can let you in, but you have to be listed with BC Housing first.

Some places to call for help

Action Committee of People with Disabilites - 926 View St., 383-4105
Adult Addiction Comm. Treatment Serv: 2nd floor, 1250 Quadra, 727-3544
AIDS Vancouver Island: 1601 Blanshard St., 384-2366
Alano Club: 1402 Broad St, 383-9151
Alcoholics Anon: #8, 2020 Douglas, 383-7744 (help), 383-0415 (off)
Cool-Aid Medical Clinic: 385-1466
Cool-Aid Phone Message Service (\$5/mth): 383-1977
Foundation of Support of Recovery for Men: 480-1342
Outreach Services Methadone Clinic: 2004 Fernwood Rd., 480-1232
Research, Education, Evaluation, & Support Prog. (REES): 595-8619
Salvation Army Addictions & Rehab Centre: 525 Johnson, 384-3396
Society of Living Intravenous Drugusers: 7-9 pm Wednesdays, 1947 Cook
Together Against Poverty Society (TAPS): #415 - 620 View Street 361-3521
Victoria Native Friendship Centre: 610 Johnson Street, 384-3211
Victoria Sobering & Assessment Centre: 1125 Pembroke, 213-4444
Vancouver Island Addiction Recovery Soc.: 536 Cecelia, 480-1342
Prostitute Empowerment & Education Services (PEERS): 744 Fairview Rd., 388-5325

Canada’s Disappeared: A Long History of Genocide

by Kevin Annett
Secretary, The Truth Commission into Genocide in Canada
Author, “Hidden from History: The Canadian Holocaust”

The so-called mainstream press in Canada has recently awoken to the continual death and disappearance of aboriginal women and children, in an irony akin to citizens of Nazi Germany suddenly “discovering” the death camps and their corpses at the end of World War Two. For as we know, the vanishing and murder of aboriginal people is the norm in Canada, not an exception, since the genocide of indigenous peoples has been legal and systematic for centuries in this country.

Like many Caucasian people, I was ignorant of this reality until I experienced it for myself, in the spring of 1992 when I arrived in Port Alberni as a United Church minister. I began to hear stories of the murder of children in my (former) church’s Alberni Indian Residential School from living eyewitnesses to these crimes, as I visited them in their homes and welcomed them to speak from the pulpit of my church. And I saw how the genocide of the past was continuing, as aboriginal people in the Alberni valley struggled and died in third-world conditions of poverty, racism and disease.

For nearly three years, I provided a forum for the stories of residential school survivors in my church, until I was summarily fired without cause in January, 1995 by United Church officials after I publicly criticized the illegal profiteering in aboriginal land by the United Church in collusion with its financial benefactor, the logging company MacMillan-Bloedel. But after I was fired, I began to move even more deeply into the world of residential school survivors, many of whom invited me to healing circles and asked me to record their stories.

Out of that experience, in collaboration with residential school survivors I wrote two books on the genocide of native people in Canada, the main one being “Hidden from History: The Canadian Holocaust.” The government of Belgium has described this book as “the only independent inquiry into legal genocide in Canada ... an insightful condemnation of murderous practices by church and state in that nation.” (Belgian Foreign Ministry, May 3, 2004). The book records many of the stories of residential school survivors that

were offered in public forums, and uses documents from church and Indian Affairs archives to prove that mass murder was sanctioned and practiced in Indian residential schools across Canada.

Two of the more shattering pieces of evidence I uncovered while writing this book were records of the death rate in residential schools, and a government document forcing aboriginal parents to surrender the legal custody of their own children to the different churches that ran the schools.

In the spring of 1907, the head medical officer for Indian Affairs in Ottawa, Dr. Peter Bryce, visited every Indian residential school in western Canada, and documented that over one-half of the aboriginal children in these schools were dying every year from a systematic practice by staff members of deliberately exposing children to tuberculosis and then not treating them, and letting them die. The startling thing is that this murderous practice was the norm, in both Catholic and Protestant Indian schools, and that it was being actively covered up by these churches.

Even worse, the fifty percent death rate stayed constant over decades across Canada: in 1923, 1949 and 1962, Indian Agents reported that between one quarter and two thirds of Indian kids in residential schools were dying each year. As a result, it’s estimated that nearly 100,000 aboriginal children died in the residential schools up until 1984.

The Christian churches are clearly responsible for this mass murder, as is evident in the second piece of evidence I uncovered: The Application for Admission Form, which every native parent was forced to sign, and which surrendered legal guardianship to the clergyman who was Principal of any residential school. The Roman Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian and United Church of Canada are therefore liable under the law for all of the tortures, rapes, and murders that went on in these schools during their existence, from 1886 to 1984.

Anything you could imagine in a Nazi death camp went on in residential schools in Canada. Indians were involuntarily sterilized, used in medical and drug testing experiments, gang raped, tortured, and systematically murdered by church staff. The United Church school in Port Alberni had an electric chair

which little kids were tortured if they spoke their own language. Pedophile rings that still operate used and murdered children as young as three years old. Mass graves of these children stand next to former residential schools in Port Alberni, Nanaimo, Alert Bay, Bella Bella, and a dozen more sites across Canada.

You’d think that a lot of church and government officials would be in jail by now on the basis of this evidence, and the many lawsuits mounted by residential school survivors since 1996. Guess again. The churches that set up and ran these residential schools have been made effectively immune from prosecution for any crimes committed there. In the past ten years, a total of only thirteen people across Canada have faced charges for “abuses” against native children in these schools, and only four of them have done any jail time. It’s simply not a crime to kill an Indian in Canada.

Many aboriginal survivors of these Christian death camps called residential schools have become fed up with the regime of coverup and silencing that exists in Canada concerning our homegrown genocide. In April of 2005, the first Aboriginal Holocaust Remembrance Day was launched in Vancouver and Winnipeg.

On April 14 2005, residential school survivors issued a public demand to the Canadian government and to the United, Catholic and Anglican churches to reveal the fate and the buried location of all of the children who died in residential schools, and to return the remains of these children to their ancestral territories. These churches and the government have so far refused to respond to this humanitarian appeal.

On April 14 2006, survivors and their friends gathered outside these churches in Vancouver and elsewhere to once again demand that the people and organizations that committed mass murder be accountable for their crimes. It’s time for the disappearance and legal murder of native people in Canada to stop. Join with us to fight for justice in our own backyard.

For more information, see this website:
www.hiddenfromhistory.org

Indigenous Voices

From Kahentinetha Horn, www.mohawknationnews.com, orakwa@paulcomm.ca: We too have suffered genocide. 99% of our people were killed off in the biggest holocaust in all humanity. 115 million of our people were killed off by the Europeans to make way for the plunder of our land and resources that followed. Canada is guilty of developing some of these methods of attack such as reservations, passes, starvation, spreading diseases, theft of our children into residential school in which only half survived, outright murder and all manner of the slow death policies it perpetrates on us today. We continue to refuse to acquiesce to the colonial government’s theft of our possessions. We stand in solidarity with you against these lethal sanctions that are meant to decimate you. Since Canada is built on the theft and exploitation of our land and resources, we the Indigenous people demand that our aid be immediately directed to our Indigenous brothers and sisters, the Palestinians.

From “helen michell” <telquaa@hotmail.com>: The earth is drying up at an alarming rate. We as human beings should do more to protect sacred lands that still have old growth rain forests, animals, birds, and indigenous peoples who are standing up and trying to protect their sacred lands. These mountains are places where fresh waters come from. I have also seen mountain goats in these mountains. Also black bears, brown bears, eagles, grizzly bears and deer. These animals need an international voice. Clear cut logging has already destroyed so many water sheds in this once pristine province and unceded province at that. Please help British Columbias indigenous people by spreading the word. As 2010 Olympics is only four years away, this province will be destroyed, to make way for unwanted ski resorts. Indigenous people have rights under international laws, and these laws need to be enforced.

Photo: Activists in Montreal support the Six Nations struggle in Ontario



On Monday, May 15th, local peace activists held a rally and a die-in, as a way to peacefully and non-violently express their dissatisfaction with war, militarization, and its accompanying propaganda. This was week two of Operation Trident Fury.

According to Article 20 SS 1 of the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights, “any propaganda for war shall be prohibited by law. Activists argue that Trident Fury is propaganda, not to mention environmentally destructive and potentially damaging to all planetary life.

Did you complete your census? Do you know that a significant part of it was outsourced by Statistics Canada, to a subsidiary of US armaments manufacturer Lockheed Martin? For more information see www.countmeout.ca or www.vivelecanada.ca.

De-Throne the Automobile

We hate the people who try to make us form the connexions we do not want to form.

Simone Weil

I want to sell you on something, a dangerous, damaging product. It kills and it maims. It ruins cities and neighbourhoods. A claustrophobic tin can on wheels, it constantly bombards you with disruptive noise. Buying the product is a terrible capital investment; large depreciation begins the instant you take possession. Owning, operating and maintaining the product consumes up to twenty per cent or more of your gross annual income on a continuing basis. It's powered by scarce, polluting, non-renewable resources, and ninety per cent of the energy it consumes is used to move the product itself from one place to another; only ten per cent transports its cargo or passengers. Wastes from the product poison the air you breathe. Oil and grease are leaked wherever it goes. When discarded, it pollutes the landscape. It enslaves you and your community, holding everything else you value hostage to its insatiable requirements. You become addicted to the product, unable to work, shop or recreate without it. It controls you.

Are you still interested? Do you really want this thing in your life? Too late. The car already owns you, and there's no escape. It is an endlessly and seductively promoted product that you are expected to covet. In our greedy, materialistic society, owning a nice car has become one of the signs of success.

As for me, I hate cars – their speeding bulk and jolting presence, their stinking fumes, the grating whirr of their tires on pavement, their everywhere-ness. Look around you and wonder what we could have had without the car as a foundation of our culture.

The automobile is the single most destructive consumer product ever invented. Every year, car crashes kill 250,000 people worldwide, over 40,000 in the United States, and 3,000 in Canada. They appropriate large chunks of police, court, legal and insurance costs. Add to this the amount of personal injury, property damage, social disruption and environmental destruction (including so-called roadkill of non-human animals) caused by cars and you have what in any other context would be considered a national crisis. Automobiles should be required to carry a stark warning label describing effects at least as deadly as, and more wide ranging than, those now included on tobacco products. Instead we virtually worship our cars, love them, have relationships with them, give them names, personalize them with adornments and make them an integral part of our lives.

With every driver speeding, tailgating, and ignoring traffic controls some of the time, our roadways have become acceptable playgrounds of death and injury – and endless close calls. Yet we think nothing of this arrangement! Pathetic-looking roadside shrines of photographs and flowers casually mark the spots where yet another driver or pedestrian has met her or his end. Meanwhile, sentences for death and injury caused by car drivers are discounted by our criminal courts. Kill someone while speeding and you will be treated more leniently than if you had shot them, although a speeding car is no less dangerous than someone running down the street waving a cocked, loaded pistol.

Our newspapers devote an entire special section to the automobile. What other segment of our manufacturing economy receives such gratuitous, uncritical promotional benefit from the corporate media? The health of the automobile industry and all that goes with it is considered

synonymous with the well-being of the North American economy. Yet honouring an industry responsible for widespread death and destruction is difficult to comprehend. It is part of what Orion Magazine's James Howard Kunstler calls "the greatest misallocation of resources in the history of the world", our addiction to fossil fuel energy consumption.

Ever so briefly following the OPEC-imposed oil shortage in the 1970s, North American car manufacturers turned out smaller, more fuel-efficient vehicles. It didn't last long. Since the mid-1980s, fuel efficiency has stagnated and worsened, the result of promoting the sales of SUVs and small trucks combined with no strengthening of government-mandated fuel efficiency targets. The School of Urban Studies at Simon Fraser University found that between 1998 and 2004, the United States had forgone 28 per cent fuel economy in passenger vehicle miles. They found three main causes: bigger, more powerful engines on average; bigger, heavier vehicles; and a shift to SUVs. Bigger, heavier cars with more powerful engines burn more fuel no matter what they are doing – idling, accelerating or cruising.

From 30 to 50 per cent of urban North America is given over to the car: streets and alleyways, driveways, garages, parkades, parking lots, service stations, car dealerships, car storage lots, car graveyards and on and on. In a car-based culture, any form of transport other than by private automobile is diminished. Pedestrians and cyclists are reduced to groveling before politicians and policy makers in order to extract a few grudging concessions which become the stuff of media photo-ops. More and more asphalt for cars, on the other hand, is simply business as usual. The result is a long list of familiar urban horrors: endless urban sprawl, gridlock, lengthy commuting distances, pollution, strip malls, and unsightly, dangerous freeways.

Nor are vehicles powered by electricity, hydrogen or natural gas an answer to the automobile's radical monopoly over our lives. A car is a car, and the hydrogen-powered version would still kill, injure, pollute and dictate to city planners. Indeed, the manufacturing of a new car alone accounts for 33 per cent of the pollution and energy consumption that that car will produce over its life cycle.

And the tyranny of the automobile is worsening. Streets have become pedestrian and cyclist terror zones. Cars speed noisily by, always above the posted limit, in ever increasing numbers, their din and fumes oppressive. Sidewalks are narrow and full of obstacles. Marked crosswalks are rare. Simply to cross at most controlled intersections, pedestrians now must push a button to activate walk signals. (It should be the other way around: let car drivers be inconvenienced.) Big-box stores and mega shopping malls are located where only a suicidal fool would try to reach them by bike or on foot. Public transit is inconvenient and woefully underfunded. Although cars disrupt nearly every aspect of urban life, we make ever more allowances to facilitate their dominion over us.

Perhaps more than anything else, cars separate us from our natural surroundings, wrapping us while we drive in a virtual reality of music and movies, digital consoles, cell phones, global positioning systems, and endless other electronic gadgets. No wonder we speed, endangering ourselves and others; the complex modern car has become a womb. Drivers exist in a world of

their own relativity, and a cyclist or a school zone appears as just another two-dimensional image on their screen. Some entities, when they approach their end-state of collapse, briefly appear to shine brighter, like a supernova before it explodes. So it seems to be with cars – they are (mostly) getting bigger, more expensive, more ostentatious and more ridiculous.

Our cars, meanwhile, manage to look out of place and awkward in just about any setting imaginable. Next time you're out walking, look around and notice what doesn't fit. It's the cars. They simply don't belong. Their presence distorts all landscapes and cityscapes. Walk along Dallas Road, through Beacon Hill Park or, for that matter, along any sidewalk. Cars stand out for their sheer inappropriateness, like so many discarded beer bottles along the West Coast Trail.

Greater Victoria, which boasts of being pedestrian and cyclist friendly, is ruled by the car as badly as any other Canadian city. The Galloping Goose and Lochside Trails are little to brag about when you control the equation for the tyranny of the automobile – a measly two trails compared with how many miles of asphalt devoted to automobiles! Cyclists, walkers, dogs, scooters and skateboarders now jostle for space (and safety!) on these two narrow trails which are frequently intersected by busy streets.

Riding Greater Victoria's bike lanes is a harrowing experience. Narrow and precariously exposed, these lanes begin and end precipitously – usually at the narrowest funnel of roadway – sometimes (but mostly not) reappearing a few blocks farther on. Big, heavy, fast-moving cars do not mix well with soft human bodies on bikes. It is complete madness. Then there is the traffic sign in Sidney: "Welcome to 'Pedestrian Friendly' Downtown Sidney. Speed Limit 30 km/h." Beyond it stretch endless streets, parking lots and traffic congestion. It's civic irony at its worst. These nods to a green way of life are just that, nods. Dethroning the car will require the complete upheaval of our fossil-fuel based transportation culture, a revolution in our way of life. Nods and concessions won't do it.

If we can make owning a car expensive and inconvenient enough, people will simply give up on them. This could, with the necessary political will, be accomplished quickly and easily: Immediately triple the price of gasoline and then keep raising it every few months; increase the price of parking to prohibitive levels while reducing parking spaces; make motor vehicle violations (such as speeding) serious offences entailing stiff fines, impoundment of the vehicle and

forfeiture of one's driver's licence; and, stop manufacturing vehicles with low gas mileage.

These changes would begin to transform our concept of personal transportation. Imagine a city without cars. Human ingenuity could work wonders with this challenge – and there is no downside! There is, moreover, little time left. Oil is both fast running out, with no suitable replacement energy source in sight, and poisoning us. What now seems a freakish idea – conjuring a city without cars – will soon be upon us in real time.

For starters, we could take a few bold steps. Ban all motorized vehicle traffic from Beacon Hill Park and Dallas Road. Convert Government, Douglas, Blanshard and Wharf Streets in the downtown area to pedestrian malls. Ban motorized vehicles from at least 20 per cent of the city's streets. Require shopping malls and big-box store destinations to eliminate at least 80 per cent of their parking spaces and replace the asphalt with native plants. Provide many more secure, safe and easily accessible parking spaces for bikes and other human-powered modes of transportation. Get our police force out of their robo-cop cruisers and on to bikes and foot power (effective policing can never be done from within an armed cage traveling at urban speed limits). Triple the funding for public transportation, using money saved from no longer having to subsidize the car. And, invest more heavily in human-powered forms of transportation for short to middle distances.

Nearly ten years after the event, I remain transfixed when I recall the immediate aftermath of Victoria's record-breaking snowfall in 1997 – there were no cars on the roads for several days. It was wonderful. People walked down the middle of Blanshard Street. Roads once again – albeit all too briefly – became part of the public domain. The absence of cars was a blessing : People pulled together to help those stranded at home; streets became places for recreation and conversation. For once the car was dethroned. Streets were safe and fun. It awakened me to what was possible.

A mostly car-less world would solve so many of the ills that plague us now, from obesity and overloaded, stressful lives to soaring healthcare costs and deadly climate change. Dethrone the automobile. Human power our civilization. Connect the dots. . . .

submitted by Brian Mason - a poet, philosopher and environmental activist who lives in James Bay.



Sharing some Thoughts about
Separateness and Interconnection

submitted by Mala

I am an old person. Having gone through many trials and tribulations, as well as many joys and delights, I have had ample opportunity to observe and analyze both myself and others. And the closer I peer at Life and its amazing manifestations, the more I see an underlying oneness linking all the apparent differences. And it appears to me that in some ways, it is the inability to perceive that oneness that constitutes one of the main causes of the suffering we experience in life.

Much of the pain we suffer on an individual basis comes from a sense of loneliness. It's not necessarily that you are completely alone in the world and have no relatives or friends and acquaintances. No, it's not that. It has to do more with a feeling that even those that know and surround you – not to mention all the crowds of strangers you pass by in the streets – are somehow separate, shut off from real contact.

You don't have to be a street person, or poor, or disabled, to have that feeling. It has nothing to do with economic or social status. It is a matter of emotional sensitivity. And, of love. How much love do you have for others? How much love are others prepared to give? and accept? Or notice, for that matter! Because, as well as needing to be loved, you need to give love. And have that love accepted and acknowledged. Only then do you have real connection. It is the give and take of love that forms the basis of our interconnectedness. And of the general interconnectedness of things in life. In Life!

Many years ago I wrote a poem that gave expression to these feelings. With your permission, I would like to share it with you. Because, based on my lifelong observations of myself and of people around me, I would not be surprised if some of you who read Street Newz felt a certain affinity with what that poem speaks of. That perhaps you might find that it describes some of your own feelings too.

If that should happen, I'd be very happy indeed. For it would open up a little window of compassion between us, even though we don't know each other personally. One more little invisible thread of interconnectedness would be added to the wonderful web of Love's rays permeating our world!

Through a Glass Pane

I am looking at you
as though through a glass pane
I want to speak to you
greet you
touch you
but my voice
cannot reach you
my extended hand
hits an invisible barrier
slips off the cold slippery
glass surface

O people! so close to me
yet so distant
beyond reach
each enveloped in the tight sheath
of your own concerns

You do not see me
busy
you hurriedly gloss over me
aloof
indifferent
unaware of the love
waiting to be offered
of the warmth
radiating towards you from my eyes
had you but bothered to look...

Forever an outsider
separated
alienated
by my own timidity
paralyzed
by an excess of longing
excess of love
of hope
and hopelessness

Outcast
pauper child in front of a shop window
craving in vain the treasures behind the glass

I pass by
endlessly keep passing by
everything
One by one
opportunities slip by and vanish
I don't know how to grab them

Devoured by longing
I watch in silence
as you keep passing by



Don't Judge

Look around you – not at me,
Please tell me what you see,
Don't act as if they're not people too,
But for the grace of God – go you,
All the souls who have lost their way,
Trying to make it through another day.
Don't treat them like they're trash,
Just because they ask you for cash.
Yes – they may buy some down or speed,
Some coke or just a little weed,
Or maybe they really want to eat,
As they trudge along a few more feet.
Who are you to look at them with scorn?
They were dealt a different hand
since they were born,
Some of them are really losers,
Scum – predators and users,
Looking for another soul to steal,
As they stand around and deal,
Conning people with their charm,
Victimizing – doing harm,
They're the bastards who should be put away,
Or not live to see another day,
Others have a different story,
Maybe once they had their days of glory,
The old lady picking bottles off the street,
The hooker being sold – like a piece of meat,
Teenagers who aimlessly roam,
Wishing they had a real home.
Who knows where they've been,
Or what horrors they might have seen?
Could it be they'd rather hide in shame,
So who are you to judge and blame?
What would you say if you knew,
That I came close to being there – too?
Would you look at me with different eyes,
Judging me for becoming what you despise?
I'm not proud of what I became,
I still have memories filled with shame,
So I can't look at them and say,
That I'm better in any way,
Someone helped me before it was too late,
Otherwise that might have been my fate.
You believe that you are my friend,
If you knew the truth about me
– would that friendship end?

Jill Cater, Feb. 22/06
communityliaison@victoriaourplace.org



There Are No Poor
In Victoria Town

There are no poor in Victoria Town
If you shut your eyes
You'll see none around
None asleep on floors or in doorways
There's only cruise ships
There's only malls
And there's only flowers.

If you close your eyes
You will hear no sirens
For the poor in Victoria Town
Only proper funerals
No pauper funerals
In Victoria Town

There are no poor in Victoria Town
If you shut your eyes and try not to think
Sink down in your couch
In the back of the car
And don't look out
And look right down
You will see nothing but niceness all around
But like the word lovely
Some words have little meaning
And the only redeeming reality in all of this
Is in the finality
Of the street casualty
In Victoria Town.

© Paul Burnside March 31, 06

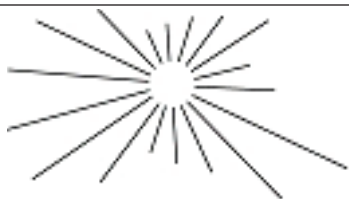
Into the arms of God

Eden works the Goverment strip
but, she's not really there at all
she blows her mind out in the alleys
before the Johns come calling
flashing cash and cock
promising to do their worst
stuffing it in
taking it all out
one trick at a time

Eden smokes a steady blue stream
perched outside the diner all day
see, she can't sleep in the daylight
'cause she knows
when the sun goes down
it's back to work
down on her knees
down to business
screaming without speaking
spreading the disease
and her own loneliness

Eden takes a moment
to lean over the rail
on that famed Blue Bridge
time between the poisonings to reflect
on how it all came to this;
memories like a slow-fisted drag
pull up upon her past.
simply release the fingered grip
and it's into the water,
back into the arms of God
but no, not today
she'll stick it out
as her spike heels click
against the worn asphalt
she shakes her thoughts like water from
her curly brown locks
catches the first car door
for another short ride
to nowhere.

j. fisher - bathtubbing@hotmail.com



Alan Rycroft
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or www.victoriacarshare.ca

Beacon Community Services

Thrift Shop

Borden & Mackenzie, Phone 479-8849

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Offering gently used clothing,
jewellery, housewares, furniture, and
much more at the lowest prices
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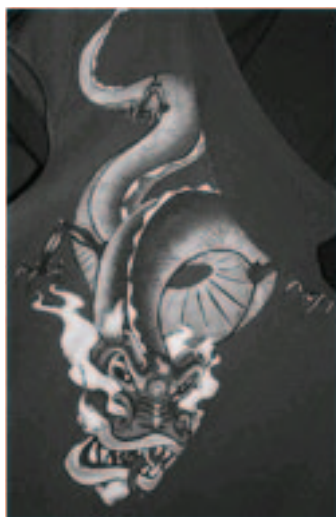
Making the
world a
better place

one latte
at a time.

529 pandora
ave

victoria

250-475-0477



"When the
people fear the
government you
have tyranny
... when the
government
fears the people
you have
liberty."

Thomas
Jefferson



1725 Quadra St, 250-386-2453
info@northparkbikeshop.com



CFUV 101.9 FM
Campus Community Radio

"Powerlessness and silence go
together. We ... should use our
privileged positions not as a
shelter from the world's reality,
but as a platform from which to
speak. A voice is a gift. It
should be cherished and used."

Margaret Atwood

Central America Support Committee

CASC

Join us first Wednesday of every month;
7:30 PM upstairs at 1923 Fernwood Road
Email: casc@telus.net

Phone: 598-7690

Web: <http://casc.communitypipe.org/>



Café Simpatico
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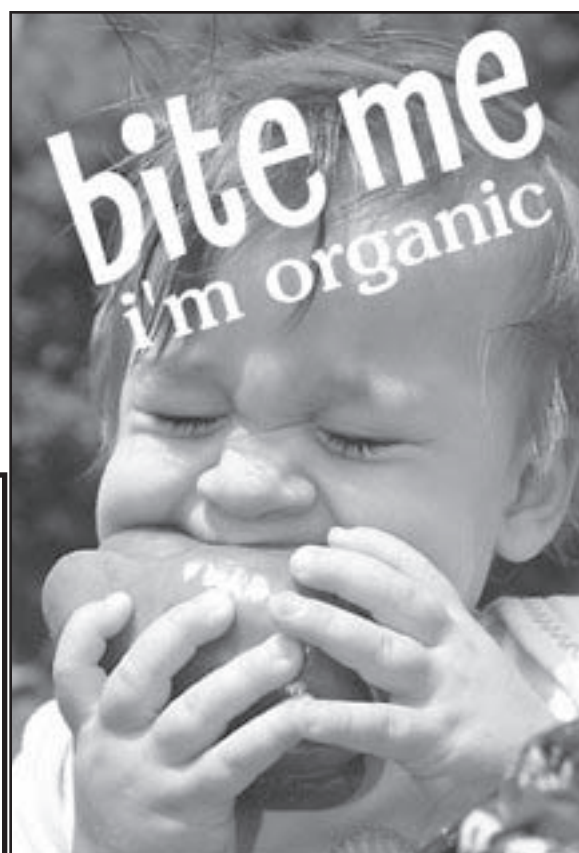


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to your door

Victoria Street Newz Distribution Team



Rick



Debbie



Ted



Janine



If you'd like to join us,
or share a conversation
and a cup of tea or
coffee, you can find
some or all of us at the
Solstice Café most
Tuesdays and Fridays,
10 am - noon.
(We don't always look so
silly, just on Mondays.)



John



Ken



John



Marlene

bean counting			
Operating Revenue	Dec/Jan	Feb/Mar	Apr/May
Coordinator's Revenue			
Advertising (payment rec'd)	160.00	0.00	80.00
Paper Sales (from vendors)	1304.50	838.50	775.00
Donations	422.30	560.00	127.00
Subscriptions	240.00	0.00	80.00
Salary from B & R	1400.00	1200.00	1200.00
Belfry Bottle Return	38.00	35.85	35.00
Total Coordinator's Revenue	3564.80	2634.35	2297.00
B&R Revenue (deposited)			
Advertising	150.00	0.00	0.00
Donations	65.00	710.00	0.00
Subscriptions	120.00	0.00	40.00
Grant Monies	1500.00	0.00	5000.00
Total B&R Rev. (deposited)	1835.00	710.00	5040.00
Total Operating Revenue	3564.80	2634.35	2297.00
Operating Expenses			
Coordinator's Expenses			
Paper & Printing Costs	1044.15	952.04	952.04
Office expenses	85.40	175.40	80.00
Misc. (postage, fees, etc.)	70.90	148.00	94.20
Community reciprocity	176.49	209.00	200.00
Bike Cart	269.53	0.00	0.00
Unpaid Debts	56.00	20.00	0.00
Total Coordinator's Expenses	1702.47	1504.44	1326.24
B & R Expenses			
Bus Tickets (2 for 1)	105.00	105.00	76.00
fm City of Vic Grant	100.00	75.00	0.00
fm Vancity Grant	1000.00	1000.00	1000.00
fm KAIROS Grant	100.00	0.00	0.00
fm PSAC Grant	0.00	100.00	100.00
fm donations/subscriptions	200.00	0.00	100.00
sub ttl B&R Expenses	1505.00	1280.00	1276.00
Total Operating Expenses	3207.47	2784.44	2602.24
Ttl Coord Rev minus Expenses (- is out of pocket, + is salary)	357.33	-150.09	-305.24



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A Great Big Thank You !!

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